

Climate Change Driven Displacement and Justice: The Role of Reparations

Kyle Fruh

Duke Kunshan University

Abstract: An increasingly wide array of moral arguments has coalesced in recent work on the question of how to confront the phenomenon of climate change driven displacement. Despite invoking a range of disparate moral principles, arguments addressing displacement across international borders seem to converge on a similar range of policy remedies: expansion of the 1951 Refugee Convention to include ecological refugees, expedited immigration (whether individual or collective), or, for entire political communities that have suffered displacement, even the ceding of sovereign territory. Curiously, this convergence is observable even across the distinction of interest for this paper: the distinction between arguments that proceed in the vein of reparations and arguments that reach their conclusion without invoking any reparations. Even though as a collection they appear to point in the same direction, I argue that non-reparative arguments that seek to address climate change driven displacement have several shortcomings, such that climate justice should be understood to include an indispensable role for reparations.

Introduction

As the effects of climate change worsen, they will collide with already fragile situations in many parts of the world to exacerbate extant challenges and create new ones. Displacement is especially deserving of attention, both because of the number of people likely to be displaced and because of what displacement means for the lives of individuals, families, cultures, and political communities.

The urgency of understanding moral dimensions of climate change driven displacement will only grow. The international community has

Correspondence: kyle.fruh@dukekunshan.edu.cn



in many ways become a less hospitable environment for refugees in recent years as the number of people fleeing dangerous surroundings has ballooned.¹ Yet climate change will contribute to the total numbers of the displaced through myriad vectors: altering the regional distribution of diseases, drought and desertification, exacerbating extreme weather events including floods, hurricanes, and wildfires, and of course through rising sea levels. Whether climate change also makes causal contributions to conflicts, which in turn force displacement, is also likely to become less controversial as effects become more pronounced in coming years.²

An increasingly wide array of moral arguments has coalesced in recent work on the question of how to confront climate change driven displacement. Despite invoking a range of disparate moral principles, arguments addressing displacement across international borders seem to converge on a similar range of policy remedies: expansion of the 1951 Refugee Convention to include ecological refugees, expedited immigration (whether individual or collective), or, for entire political communities that have suffered displacement, even the ceding of sovereign territory. Curiously, this convergence is observable even across the distinction of interest for this paper: the distinction between arguments that proceed in the vein of reparations and arguments that reach their conclusion without invoking any reparative obligations. Even though this collection of arguments appears to point in a single direction, I argue that in the case of climate change driven displacement, climate justice should be understood to include an indispensable role for reparations.

I begin by briefly canvassing recently developed non-reparative arguments, before moving on to recently developed reparative arguments that parallel the conclusions of the former. I then introduce an account of the deprivations of displacement that is shaped by accounts offered by people who have experienced displacement. Despite being in many ways provisional, it is nonetheless more robust than what is typically deployed in this argumentative context. I argue in the final section that non-reparative arguments are less able to adequately respond to the nature and depth of the deprivations associated with displacement. I identify two sources of this deficit. First, it results from differences between visions of justice that are informed by contemporaneous claims against some standard, rather than historical claims informed by the status quo ante. Second, it arises from non-reparative views' relative neglect of restoring relationships: by eschewing the task of holding parties responsible for the deprivations of displacement, non-reparative views leave relationships marred by injustice unaddressed. As such, I claim that non-reparative

arguments suffer undesirable shortcomings as an account of what justice for the displaced might look like. I conclude by offering a few brief responses to difficulties attendant on reparative arguments in this context.

Non-Reparative Moral Arguments Concerning Climate Change Driven Displacement

Rather than attempt an exhaustive survey of arguments fitting this category, I relate the arguments of three authors that represent the range of conclusions about climate change driven displacement that arguments of this category support. Pellegrino (2014) is representative of the tamest variety of conclusion, arguing largely in support of expanding the criteria for the 1951 Refugee Convention to include those displaced through the effects of climate change. His argument for this conclusion relies on an account of human rights at the heart of state legitimacy. In particular, some climate refugees face the threat of becoming stateless when they can no longer safely rely on their home state to satisfy their right to inhabit territory. As a result, just as signatories to the Convention have an obligation not to return refugees to their home state if they are likely to suffer dangerous persecution there, so too Pellegrino argues receiving countries have an obligation to resettle those displaced across international lines through the effects of climate change. For our purposes, the key feature to notice about Pellegrino's argument is that it relies upon contemporaneous claims that certain rights be satisfied rather than claims that identify duties of reparation for particular past violations.³ Rather than the moral obligations of the conclusion being grounded in a need to repair past infractions, they are instead grounded in contemporaneous need.

The conclusion Risse (2009) favors is that those who are displaced will often have a claim to immigrate elsewhere, sometimes as individuals or families, but sometimes as larger communities. He argues on the basis of an egalitarian principle of common ownership of the earth. In terms of what is being offered to the displaced, this is a step beyond the offer of asylum. Having a right to freely immigrate (possibly to many countries, and assuming that right is operationalized and recognized, perhaps in the form of something resembling Nansen passports⁴) is a much better, more powerful, less vulnerable position to be in than having even a well-founded claim to asylum. Risse's argument, like Pellegrino's, is non-reparative: it identifies a current and ongoing claim that is not being fulfilled, rather than a past violation that calls out for repair.

Finally, Nine (2010) argues that what is owed to the displaced will extend, in extreme cases, to ceding sovereign territory to displaced political communities, like those of low-lying pacific island nations such as Kiribati and Tuvalu when their territories become uninhabitable. Her argument, based on collective rights of self-determination and the Lockean proviso to leave as good and enough applied to territorial holdings, only invokes what (groups of) people are owed in a perfectly general way and makes no reference to the quite particular way in which those affected will have been displaced. On Nine's view, the same would be owed to a displaced political community whose territory was beset by disastrous earthquakes, for example. Again, her argument is non-reparative—it cites a current state of affairs that falls afoul of a moral principle, rather than a past violation that falls to some identifiable party to rectify.

Reparative Moral Arguments Concerning Climate Change Driven Displacement

Interestingly, the same array of conclusions we saw in the previous section is also offered by authors whose arguments proceed in a reparative vein, citing past injustices rather than unmet contemporaneous claims. Again, I present three examples corresponding to the different conclusions as a representative but not exhaustive sample of arguments of this kind.

Ahmed (2017) cites the exploitative history of colonialism and its damaging legacy in Bangladesh in addition to lopsided contributions to greenhouse gas emissions in deriving his conclusion that prolific emitting countries should accept those who are displaced as refugees. His argument is reparative—it is particular, past injustices that generate in identifiable parties the duties to address the damage they have caused.

Similarly, Heyward and Ödelan (2016) argue that the particular form of compensation the displaced are owed is a universal passport, such that they could have maximal freedom to choose how and where to resettle. In making their argument, they borrow from Goodin (2013, 1991). Compensation is owed as a result of the frustration of the legitimate expectations had by the displaced to continue to inhabit places their families and communities have inhabited for generations. Heyward and Ödelan's argument is reparative, and while they acknowledge that there are limitations on what kinds of repair are possible, the idea of a universal passport is defended not as a measure that speaks to universal human rights and thus an entitlement that could be claimed by anyone. Instead, the universal passport is offered as the best possible (albeit still inadequate) reparations for having unjustly frustrated legiti-

mate expectations. It is the measure by which, on Heyward and Ödelan's view, the displaced may be best restored to something resembling their state prior to the infraction that results in their predicament.⁵

Finally, some authors, including Angell (2017), have argued for the conclusion that entire political communities threatened with displacement are owed new sovereign territory, to be ceded to them by offending states as reparations for causing the displacement.⁶ In contrast to Nine's (2010) non-reparative argument which also concludes that ceding sovereign territory is called for as a response to displacement, Angell argues that it is wrongful past impositions of harm that ground duties of states to cede territory to displaced political communities. Offending states have the obligation of restoring the displaced to the status quo ante, or as close to it as possible.

The Deprivations of Displacement

So it seems that it is possible to defend largely the same range of conclusions concerning moral responses to climate change driven displacement on very different grounds—both reparative and non-reparative arguments claim to support either modification of the Refugee Convention, enhanced immigration privileges, or in some cases even the cession of new sovereign territory. If the range of conclusions they support is not different, is there nonetheless a reason to prefer either reparative or non-reparative arguments?

To argue for an affirmative answer to that question, I will first set out a provisional list of deprivations associated with displacement. In constructing this list, I have tried to learn from the accounts of people who have experienced displacement.⁷ This list is by no means definitive, yet I suggest it represents an improvement over the narrowly focused or overly abstract or reductively simple accounts that usually inform arguments in this area. I have constructed the list as a way of capturing deprivations that might be experienced by displaced individuals. Several of the deprivations on the list, though, have a clearly social dimension, and might also capture a deprivation that is suffered by a collective.⁸ Different cases of displacement will differently instantiate the incomplete, sometimes overlapping list of deprivations I assemble here.

Material Resources

In many cases of climate change driven displacement, anything not portable will be lost. Circumstances could certainly limit more or less severely how total and permanent the losses of possessions are, since some

displacement will be quite sudden while some may be more gradual and phased. Either way, some goods will not accompany those leaving.

Security and Health

The UN Commission on Human Rights (1998) says of internal displacement that it “breaks up families, cuts social and cultural ties, terminates dependable employment relationships, disrupts educational opportunities, denies access to such vital necessities as food, shelter and medicine, and exposes innocent persons to such acts of violence as attacks on camps, disappearances and rape”(1). Some of the items on this formidable list of deprivations deepen our view of the material resources put at risk by displacement. The others highlight the ways in which displacement puts basic security in jeopardy. The security risks faced by those in refugee camps are grave, additionally so for the scant recourse to legal protections many refugees enjoy.⁹ Exposure to risks of physical violence are probably just the more overt end of rather greater exposure to additional kinds of deprivations in health and wellbeing. Achotegui (2017) has developed a catalogue of psychiatric complications typical of the refugee experience which he calls ‘Ulysses Syndrome,’ invoking the archetypal depiction of a protracted, uncertain, and dangerous journey to characterize undesirable mental health effects associated with being in that circumstance. Some kinds of impairment may be quite lasting and ongoing rather than episodic.

Land

Beyond being a material resource, to many the land they occupied will have been a home. In cases of land rendered permanently uninhabitable, then, in addition to being displaced, we might say that such people will also suffer being dislocated, having been deprived of what will have been in many cases the only home they or their family had ever known.

Personal Identity and History

One way of elaborating the sense of dislocation that may accompany displacement is in terms of one’s identity. Upon the occasion of fleeing her native Syria, a refugee expressed these thoughts: “Leaving Syria would be like taking my soul away from me.” She described the crossing of the border: “This feels like they are closing the lid of my coffin.”¹⁰ These sentiments are echoed in Viet Thanh Nguyen’s deeply insightful, fictional portrayal of a refugee experience, in which enduring the violence and loss of being a refugee are literally tantamount to death.¹¹

Pacific Islanders are among the most vulnerable to displacement, and their example has attracted attention. Consider the following quote offered about identity and place in Vanuatu: “Land to a ni-Vanuatu is what a mother is to a baby. It is with land that he defines his identity and it is with land that he maintains his spiritual strength.”¹² The sentiment is widely echoed across the region; for example, as Murray (2016) comments on Palau: “Personal identity flows from a family lineage that is defined by the lands it controls” (2). Linked as it is so intimately to the land, individuals’ sense of personal identity is threatened by displacement. When that displacement is permanent, the cut can be deep, the scar never really healed: “For the islanders, then, the . . . destruction of the villages, farms, cemeteries holding the ancestors, and other landforms demolishe[s] not only productive assets but also the roots of identity and much of the means of memory and history.”¹³

Shared History, Community, and Culture

Personal identity and history are not all that is at stake: one’s connection to one’s community, its history, and culture is also threatened by displacement.¹⁴ Here are the thoughts of a Syrian refugee, in which her separation from her community occasioned a kind of numbness: “Doaa had trouble ignoring the numbness that overcame her. At least in Daraa she had a purpose. She was a recognized member of a supportive community . . . Here, she felt like a tolerated guest living off sympathy, a refugee and one of a growing group of helpless people . . . But who was she without her community?”¹⁵

In some cases, one’s physical displacement from the community is sufficient to introduce these risks. In other cases, the displacement and dispersal of whole communities will exacerbate the risks: one may lose one’s community and culture not just because one was forced to leave it, but because the entire community was uprooted. Here is how one community member responded to the diminishing number of residents on Isle de Jean Charles, in Louisiana: “[E]ventually there won’t be anyone left out there. And who we are, our unique Native community, will become fractured, will disappear along with the land.”¹⁶

In particular, small island communities are vulnerable to this calamity: “[C]ommunity relocation means that an important aspect of rootedness, having at least some people (kinfolk) there, sustaining the relationship with the land, or ‘keeping the home fires burning,’ is lost.”¹⁷ In Micronesia, as well as elsewhere, loss of land—literal, physical loss as is threatened by rising sea levels—is “simultaneously a threat to the

group's social existence and to its status as part of the community, society, and culture."¹⁸

Political Affiliation

As a provisional additional entry, it bears noting that the threats to community also have a specifically political aspect. One's political standing and affiliation at some level are changed or surrendered, often to be substituted by some inferior kind of political status, as would be the case when someone who was formerly a citizen in their own country is now a refugee or immigrant somewhere else. In some extreme cases, it may be that nothing is substituted at all, and the displaced become stateless.¹⁹

Agency

Drawing on Hannah Arendt, Parekh (2016) describes the "ontological deprivation" of displacement: "It is a reduction to bare life, an expulsion from the common realm of humanity, and a denial of meaningful agency" (140). The displaced are surrendered into a state of relative powerlessness or even helplessness, extracted from the context and environment in which their agency was constructed and supported.

Nine (2018, 2016) argues that one's home is a crucial and literal part of one's agency, such that "[a]brupt, permanent removal from one's home severely disrupts the functional processes of autonomous agency . . . If one already has a home, then the home environment is embedded as a non-fungible contextual element of her procedural autonomy. It cannot be traded for or found in another dwelling. It is not the case that any other house would have the same value for me as my home" (2016: 46). Gendreau (2017) emphasizes the social and historical roots of agency, such that breaches in social connections or ties to the past tend to undermine it. There are strong connections here between agency, shared history, and personal identity. Deprivations in agency are echoed in many moments of refugee narratives. For example, accompanying many choices one Syrian refugee made was the feeling that "their destiny [was] no longer in their own hands."²⁰ Viet Thanh Nguyen (2017) expresses a similar feeling after having been separated from his parents as a very young child refugee in the United States: "[B]eing taken away from my family was simply another sign of how my life was no longer in my hands, or those of my parents. My life was in the hands of strangers" (212).

In light of this account of the deprivations of displacement, in the next section I will argue that non-reparative arguments suffer from flaws that reparative arguments are better positioned to avoid, even if on the

surface they seem to point in the same directions in answer to the question of what ought to be done to address climate change driven displacement.

The Indispensable Role of Reparations for Climate Change Driven Displacement

Attitudes about the nature of the distinction between non-reparative and reparative arguments are mixed: Cara Nine (2010), on the heels of giving an argument based on collective, contemporaneous claims to rights of self-determination, expresses openness to the idea that her argument might be supplemented by reparative arguments, and her subsequent work includes contributions to thinking about deprivations associated with displacement that might call out for reparations. On the other hand, Christopher Kutz (2004) and Simon Caney (2006), for example, argue (in slightly different but related contexts) that sticking with contemporaneous considerations of distributive justice is superior to sorting through historical claims of injustice for which reparations are owed. I argue for a third position: that reparative arguments, in the context of climate change driven displacement, are an indispensable component of climate justice.

The central criterion I wish to advance is that adequate responses to climate change driven displacement must be sufficiently attentive to the deprivations associated with it. Now, it would be no good for this claim to imply that sufficiently attending to deprivations requires full repair in all cases. As many have observed, and as the account of deprivations offered in the previous section makes no attempt to obscure, some of the damage of displacement is literally irreparable.²¹ The way that personal identity and shared history are bound up with specific geography, for example, ensures that sea level rise will do some irreparable damage. While it is surely worth remembering, the fact that some of the damage cannot be repaired is not helpful in defining a criterion views of justice should meet in order to adjudicate among those views. Nonetheless, my claim is that non-reparative views are systematically vulnerable to being insufficiently attentive to the deprivations of displacement.

A salient way in which my claim could turn out to be false is that many of the deprivations I've assembled above are also the kinds of things that will be registered in most schemes of distributive justice. For example, the loss of access to material resources is a deprivation that would shape moral thinking both from a reparative point of view (as a loss) and from a contemporaneous distributive point of view (as a lack). In that sense, non-reparative arguments might well claim to be sufficiently

attentive to that deprivation. A similar case might be readily made for deprivations in security and health, and possibly also political affiliation. Maybe the case could even be extended to all the listed deprivations, though it seems a more difficult case to make with some of the remaining categories, since they are not deprivations in access to fungible resources or reducible to that. They are instead a loss of something that was particular to the displaced. That difficulty could be explained away as arising mostly due to the irreparable nature of some of the losses—which we've already conceded isn't relevant for formulating a criterion that can be used to adjudicate between reparative and non-reparative arguments in this context. But as I see it, there are other factors at work that *are* relevant. Here I elaborate two key differences in how reparative and non-reparative arguments orient themselves to the deprivations of displacement.

Contemporaneous Claims vs. the Status Quo Ante

First, whereas non-reparative accounts compare the contemporaneous situation of the displaced against some objective standard or against what others have, reparative accounts compare the contemporaneous situation of the displaced with their situation before displacement. Many of the deprivations suffered by the displaced are better understood as—or even not possible to understand as anything other than—a loss in something that formerly obtained, rather than as a failure to reach some particular threshold in welfare or wealth or capabilities or some such. For example, consider displaced Pacific Islanders whose home islands have become uninhabitable due to sea level rise and its ruinous train of effects. What they enjoy as their homeland, the roots of their personal identity, their shared history, and the particular features of their agency are not positive entitlements that anyone may claim must be provided to her. A shared history makes no sense as a positive entitlement. But, for people who do have and enjoy those things, it seems indisputable that they have a claim against others not to take those things away. It is essential to understanding the moral case of displacement to calibrate duties by making the comparison with the status quo ante. Accepting arguments that proceed without reparations carries a huge risk of overlooking the depth of deprivations associated with displacement and failing to acknowledge the nature of those deprivations not as simply problematic inequalities, for example, but instead as destructive impositions on some by others.²²

If we compare the reparative and non-reparative cases for ceding new sovereign territory to entirely displaced political communities, for

example, the non-reparative case offered by Nine (2010) tells us that the key moral claim is a right to territory rooted in a collective right to self-determination. The fact that the world's nations have now occupied all territory means that this right cannot be enjoyed by the displaced without ceding territory. Nine argues some states have an obligation to cede territory based on the Lockean proviso, which is flouted by a comprehensive occupation of the earth's territory when a particular group's entire territory is rendered uninhabitable. This directs us to see that their right to self-determination is fulfilled, but provides no automatic guidance with respect to the question of who should bear the burdens of the duty.²³ It also under-informs what the measures should actually be designed to accomplish: a collective could be positioned to enjoy its collective right to self-determination in ways that were utterly incongruous with its history of exercising that right (cf. Gendreau 2017). Welcoming a community of displaced Tuvaluans to occupy and administer lightly inhabited territory in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales might well honor their right to self-determination, but it does very little to repair the deprivations they would have suffered in terms of shared history and personal identity. Anything that could function as connective tissue between that history and the intervention proposed would in that measure begin to look reparative. For proposals such as Angell's (2017), which is explicitly reparative, the deprivations of displacement will play a central role in making determinations of what kinds of interventions would not only restore displaced political communities to the capacity for self-determination, but in ways that are informed by what the community has lost.²⁴

Restoring Relationships

The second key difference between the orientations toward the deprivations of displacement exhibited by reparative and non-reparative arguments is that the latter are not geared to restore just relations or repairing trust. Redistribution is different from reparations in many ways, among them in that the latter seeks to repair a relationship marred by injustice. The character of the deprivations is inflected by their causal origin: Although in either case I am left without money, there are still important differences between losing my wallet and having it stolen. The deprivations of displacement are not merely natural disasters that have befallen the displaced—they are not just things that have been lost, but things that have been taken away. Displaced people and communities face a future in which those responsible for their plight are every bit as influential as they were in the past. Having experienced deprivations in mate-

rial resources, in shared history and culture, in personal identity, and in agency, all of which have strong causal ties to the activities of powerful, distant actors, the displaced will surely be right to understand their relationship to those actors in light of suffering injustice. The neutrality of redistribution with respect to past violations overlooks the task of restoring just relations. To again draw on the example of Nine (2010), she speaks throughout of the rest of the world's "territorial disposition" as the cause of statelessness when, for example, small pacific island states run out of inhabitable land. But this is, to say the least, an odd way of characterizing what has caused the political community to become stranded.²⁵ Those islands have been a suitable home for generations—the relevant change afoot now is not in the territorial disposition of the rest of the world. It is instead of course sea levels that are changing, and that is a result of the greenhouse gas emissions from elsewhere. There is thus a key relation that goes missing in Nine's depiction: that between the displaced and emitters. Especially in the case of the displacement of entire political communities, there is a need for restoring just relations between those states and the state parties responsible for the lion's share of emissions. Repairing relationships and trust is to some extent built into reparative arguments, but they go missing in non-reparative arguments.

This point can be made with the case of Caney's (2006) rejection of reparations. Having argued that principles that might underwrite reparations are beset by difficulties, he proposes that burdens for addressing climate change generally should be distributed chiefly on an ability to pay basis. But the relation between those with the ability to pay and the displaced is not directly the relation in need of repair. Indeed, ignoring for a moment possible differences in determinations of what is owed to the displaced, consider the contrast in expressive value between the needs of the displaced being met by those most responsible for their plight, on the one hand, and those most able to secure resources for them, on the other. Reparations can play a pivotal role in restoring just relations because of the way they embody responsibility being accepted, hardship being taken on, and acknowledgment of both the damage caused and the wrong done. Even if theoretically those most able to pay are duty-bound to do so, and even if they are providing the same resources that would otherwise be provided as reparations, little or none of this additional repair is advanced. In fact, it seems likely that such a scheme would always take on an air of elite philanthropy—an occasion for gratitude rather than reconciliation.

To be sure, Caney would deny that in many cases repair of a relationship is even an intelligible goal, since, as he argues, in many cases the responsible parties are no longer alive or, in the case of some defunct states (like the USSR), in existence. This is in keeping with his central contention against reparations in the case of climate change, namely that attributing responsibility to particular duty-bearers for reparations is problematic. Nonetheless, assigning duties for reparations within generations based on causal contributions to climate change seems compatible with Caney's view—he elsewhere endorses a causal account of responsibility for *recent* emissions (Caney 2005), and the problems he raises are strongly associated with specifically intergenerational contexts. Climate change does, of course, have a clear intergenerational dimension (Gardiner 2006), but it would be easy to exaggerate how much of the problem resides in the distant past. Global emissions have yet to peak, and have accelerated more rapidly in the last 70 years than any time previously: The proportion of total, historic CO₂ emissions represented by the most recent 30 years or so is huge and continues to grow.²⁶ The relationship between the displaced and emitters needn't be understood as stretching across vast swaths of time—entities causally responsible for many of the emissions driving displacement will be contemporaries of the displaced. This is perhaps an uncustomary way of thinking of reparations, since high-profile cases of reparations have typically been connected to moral violations in the somewhat distant past, such as slavery in the US context, or colonialism in the global context.²⁷ If Caney is right that dead individuals and defunct states can't be duty-bearers for reparations, that limits the pool of potential parties to whom reparative duties can be assigned, but it seems not to be a good reason to abandon the idea of reparations altogether.

As Caney rightly notes, there is some ambiguity over whether responsibility for reparations should be shouldered by states, individuals, corporations, or international institutions (2006: 467). His criticism of adopting a pluralistic position with respect to those possible duty-bearers is that it fails to “provide a full account of who should bear the burdens of global climate change” (469), since many erstwhile emitting members of all four categories of potentially responsible entities are dead or defunct. But if the point made about recency in the previous paragraph is right, perhaps this limitation isn't so severe. Furthermore, “a full account” is a lot to ask for. The absence of a full account does not entail that the very idea of reparations is incoherent, or that no relations that can be repaired stand in need of repair, or that no duty-bearers can be identified, or that

no reparative duties can be attributed to them. I have been arguing that reparations remain an indispensable part of what climate justice must include in the case of the displaced. This claim is compatible with versions of reparations that are expansive both in terms of the duty-bearers they ultimately include and in terms of what reparations are owed. But it is also compatible with limited, hemmed-in versions of reparations that identify fewer parties and demand only unambitious reparations. Which version of reparations is justified will depend on the relevant substantive arguments. I grant that, in the current context of global climate action so slow and incremental that it is probably better described as inaction, even a partial account capable of underwriting modest reparations would be a startling victory. Still, jettisoning reparations from our accounts of climate justice altogether would not just be a resounding defeat, but a shameful forfeit.

There has been an advantage in side-stepping debates about moral responsibility for climate change, and this has enhanced the appeal of non-reparative arguments. While I do not wish to deny that attributions of responsibility for climate change are indeed complex, I conclude by offering two further comments on that appeal. First, the appeal is likely to wain as attribution of responsibility becomes in some ways less intractable. I have already noted how more pronounced climate effects will resolve some ambiguity, and I have responded to some worries about identifying duty-bearers for reparations. Development in climate modeling will also lessen the difficulty. For example, for extreme weather events like 2017's Hurricane Harvey, which delivered unprecedented precipitation to Houston and the surrounding area, scientists can compare the observed set of circumstances against counterfactual models that remove, either locally or globally, the influence of anthropogenic climate change.²⁸ As a result, they are able to reach an assessment of how much more likely such an event has become in virtue of particular contributions to radiative forcing. Or consider the recently launched Climate TRACE initiative, which promises to give a full global accounting of sources of greenhouse gas emissions in real time.²⁹ Combined with the fact that an increasing proportion of total historical emissions will have taken place well past any age of innocence, as discussed above, it seems some of the barriers to assigning responsibility for climate change will come down even if they are not completely eliminated.

Second, although the theoretical difficulties of assigning responsibility for climate change are real, the theoretical difficulties of accepting that deprivations associated with displacement are not directly relevant to

questions of climate justice are also formidable. Especially in an emerging global context in which the causal history of every large-scale moral problem calling out for address is massively complex, it's not clear that relinquishing the aspirations of reparative justice is, in the end, any less theoretically difficult than holding on to them.

Conclusion

I have not sought to support any particular conclusion about what it is that those displaced through the effects of climate change will be owed. I have rather sought to suggest that, whatever it is, it should be informed by the way that being displaced has disfigured their lives, and it should have the aim and function of restoring the displaced to more just relations with the responsible parties. Non-reparative arguments in this arena are in many ways promising, and we should welcome additional reasons to think that abandoning the displaced to their own devices would be a moral catastrophe. Nonetheless, I have argued that climate justice includes an ineliminable role for reparative arguments. Even if it stretches our imaginations of what might be possible, we should accept that the deprivations of climate change driven displacement will not be adequately addressed without reparations.³⁰

Endnotes

1. See <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/> for statistics.
2. Cf. Mach et al 2019.
3. Butt 2006 offers a useful taxonomy of many related terms in the same general area as reparations: rectification, reparations, restoration, restitution, compensation, and so on. He treats 'rectification' as the most general category. My use of 'reparative' in this paper is comparably broad.
4. See <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/events/nansen/4aae50086/nansen-man-action-vision.html>.
5. Additional reparative arguments that tend toward a similar conclusion are offered by Biermann and Boas (2008) and Byravan and Rajan (2010; 2015).
6. Additional reparative arguments for new sovereign territory are offered by Dietrich and Wündisch (2015) and Buxton (2019).
7. Although derived independently, there is some overlap between the list I present and the work on non-economic loss and damage presented in (UNFCCC 2013). From my perspective, the need for understanding loss and damage more comprehensively than the UNFCCC technical paper began to speak to bears directly on implications for climate justice. See Preston (2017) for a critical interpretation of the technical paper that reveals some stark limitations of its framework though.
8. In allowing the possibility of collective deprivations, I do not mean to imply that collectives are experiencing agents in the same way individuals are. Cf. (Hess 2013; Pasternak 2017; List and Pettit 2011).
9. See generally Parekh 2016.
10. Fleming 2017, 81–82.
11. Nguyen 2017, 17.
12. Campbell 2012, 61. The original source is listed there.
13. Murray 2016, 4.
14. See Moore 2015, 34–70.
15. Fleming 2017, 94.
16. Rush 2018, 33.
17. Campbell 2012, 64.
18. Peterson 2009, 112.
19. See McAdam 2012.
20. Fleming 2017, 176.
21. Including De Shalit (2011) and Campbell (2012).
22. It might be asserted that more developed understandings of the deprivations

of displacement reveal an odd tension in some reparative justice arguments too. Ahmed (2017) is a good example: if the damage is so great and reparations are in fact owed by identifiably responsible parties, why would the reparations owed be so modest as the requirement to offer asylum to someone formerly a citizen of a sovereign political community who has lost that affiliation and their home and much else besides? Considering how much is being taken from the displaced, if what is offered as reparations is simply immigration easement, it will be hard to understand what has taken place as anything like repair. I accept this point, and indeed make it myself in “Climate Change Driven Displacement and Anticipatory Moral Failure” (unpublished manuscript).

23. Cf. Dietrich and Wündisch 2015, 92.
24. Implicit in the foregoing discussion is also a desirable flexibility in reparative views in addressing deprivations as individual or collective. Whether, in any particular instance of displacement, addressing collective rights or individual rights should be prioritized might be a difficult question. Acknowledging and responding to deprivations suffered by involved individuals and collectives seems a useful if not necessary way forward in addressing such difficulty.
25. Cf. Kolers 2012.
26. Data from a wide variety of sources corroborates these claims. For a visual depiction of the history of CO₂ emissions, see <https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions>.
27. The literatures are of course vast. A useful starting point that touches on both the examples given is Miller and Kumar (2007).
28. See Otto et al. (2017) and Oldenborgh et al. (2017).
29. See <https://carbontracker.org/climatetrace/>.
30. I'd like to thank audiences at events hosted or organized by the International Association for Environmental Philosophy, the New Mexico/Texas Philosophical Society, the University of Washington, Duke University, and Ashoka University for feedback on earlier drafts of this paper. I also thank Marcus Hunt for comments, along with two reviewers and the editor of this issue for additional improvements.

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